

to me, but on securing the bird found it to be a Bachman's Sparrow. It was a female with two eggs at least of the litter still to be laid. Mentioning the fact to Mr. Frank N. Irving, he said that he had noticed the same difference in the song of some birds that he was watching. From the difference in song I at once supposed that we had found Bachman's Sparrow breeding here and told Mr. Irving that if he found the nest it would be an arched one. The following Sunday he secured not only the nest but both the parent birds. This nest and another open nest, which must undoubtedly be the Pine-woods', have been carefully photographed and the close similarity of the surroundings shown. The two locations are not much over a hundred yards apart.

The pair of birds taken by Mr. Irving were submitted for examination to the Biological Survey in Washington and found not to differ in plumage from type specimens of the Pine-woods Sparrow, which did not astonish us here, as we find much difficulty in distinguishing the two among the specimens that we take here. Of the dozen or so *Pucæas* that pass through my hands yearly it seems as if the winter specimens oftenest approach the Bachman type as described by Ridgway. Coues seems to be mixed on the subject but I have not his 'Key' at hand to refer to.

Now the problem before us is whether there are two *Pucæas* or one nesting here. If one, why should it ever build an arched nest, and why, when it does build an arched nest, does it sing a different song? Unfortunately I was so busily occupied during most of the nesting season this year that I did not get a fair chance to settle the question beyond doubt, but desire to make these observations public now so that we may not lose credit for the discovery, as I did for my Bachman's and Swainson's Warblers.

In this connection let me also mention that I found the Savannah Sparrow nesting at Tybee this year. It seems to have been found by Alexander Wilson in approximately the same locality about a hundred years ago.—W. J. HOXIE, *Savannah, Ga.*

**Nesting of *Passerherbulus henslowi henslowi* on Grosse Isle, Michigan.**—Since May, 1907, I have observed on nearly every trip afield a small colony of four or five pairs of Henslow's Sparrows in a field in the central part of the island. This field has been allowed to grow up into a dense tangle of goldenrod, asters, pigweed, and other weed growth. Here during May and June I can always hear the very characteristic *se-slich'* calls of the males that are generally perched on some tall swaying weed-stalk. I never gave the time to make a careful search for the nests, but on May 31, 1909, I accidentally found one. I was passing through the lowest part of the field where it borders a woodland, and is generally rather wet. Here I flushed a Henslow's Sparrow from almost beneath my feet, and a short search revealed the nest. This was well screened by a bunch of grasses, sunk in a slight depression, and was composed of fine grasses, and contained four eggs. I withdrew to a short distance to await the

return of the female, and I must admit that it was with some difficulty that I was able to discover the nest again, so well was it hidden. The female again hurriedly flushed which helped me out from further search. In late summer and early fall it is a tedious matter to make these little mouse-like sparrows flush, and once put up they pitch down into the grass apparently only a short distance away, and evidently worm their way through the tangled grass to a distant part of the field. In 1905 I saw the first bird April 30, and the last Oct. 1; in 1904 the last was secured Oct. 2. In 1906 I noted the first May 6; in 1908, May 6; and in 1909, May 12.—B. H. SWALES, *Grosse Isle, Mich.*

**The Impaling Instinct in Shrikes.**—The shrike habit of impaling its prey on thorns is mentioned in nearly every book on birds, but the greatest diversity exists as to the reason given for the habit, some maintaining that it is done out of an innate love of torture, others, to lure other victims, still others, that it serves only as a fork to hold the prey, while most seem to agree with Audubon that it is "quite a mystery."

As I can find, in the literature at my disposal, only three references to its returning to feed on its victim (Condor, IV, also quoted in Bailey's 'Handbook of the Birds of the Western United States'; Bull. 9, U. S. Dept. of Agric., Div. of Biol. Sur.; and Knight's statement in 'Birds of Maine' that "sometimes they do" return), it seemed desirable to put the following observation on record.

The shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus excubitorides*) in the vicinity of Albuquerque, New Mexico, feeds, during the late fall and winter, quite frequently on the lizards (*Uta stansburiana* and *Holbrookia maculata*) which usually are about in some numbers during the warmer hours of an average winter day. These the shrike impales on thorns, etc., according to its usual custom with small birds and grasshoppers. But the month of December, 1909, was unusually cold and the lizards did not appear.

While riding over the mesa early in January I both saw and heard a shrike perched on a desert willow (*Chilopsis*) feeding on some dry hard substance. Examination showed that the food was the extremely dry bodies of some lizards that had all the appearance of having been placed there several weeks before. The ground about was strewn with fragments and there were still many on the thorn-like branches of the *Chilopsis*. It was the noise the bird made in his attempt to break up this material that first attracted my attention. It is well to observe that in our dry atmosphere such an impaled animal does not decay as it would in a more humid climate but cures perfectly. In fact the native people regularly dry pieces of meat for future use by fastening it to the clothes-line where it is exposed to the almost tropical sun and desert wind.—J. R. WATSON, *University of New Mexico.*

**Petrochelidon fulva pallida in Texas.**—Among a number of skins collected at Kerrville, Texas, by Mr. Isadore Prions which I recently received